C2710-1

$1.25 a copy; $55 a year

Monday, July 8, 1985

Advertising Age®

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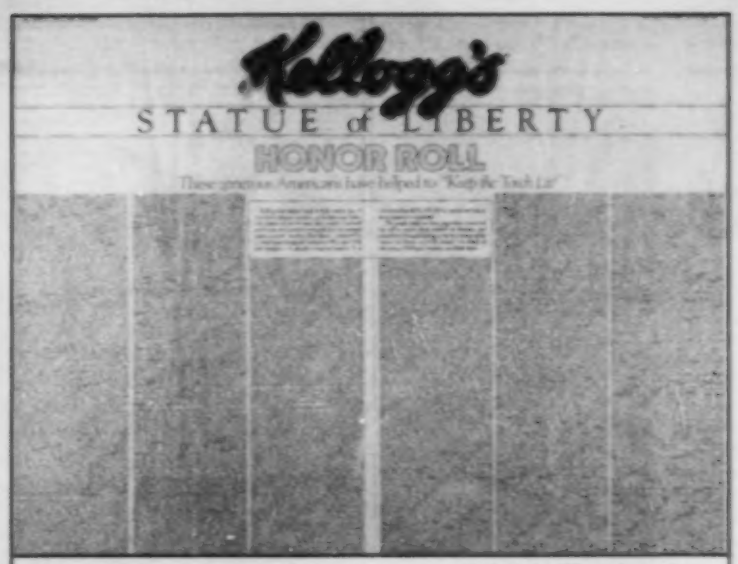

Kellogg says thanks via 'USA Today'

Kellogg Co. used this spread and five additional pages in *USA Today* to list Statue of Liberty restoration contributors. *(See story on Page 2.)*

Summer forecast: Hotter for coolers

By SCOTT HUME

The booming, $333 million wine-cooler segment is digesting a series of strategic moves that brought new players and new tactics into the action last week.

The big surprise among the players is the dramatic entry of Brown-Forman. The Louisville-based distiller bought out segment leader California Cooler, Stockton, Cal., for $63 million in cash plus millions more in incentive payments based on future sales.

Also trying to cash in, through new products rather than acquisition of an existing brand, are brewer Adolph Coors Co., Golden, Colo., and vintner-distiller Schenley Industries, New York.

Separately, G. Heileman Brewing Co., La Crosse, Wis., is expanding distribution of two brands in an effort to become a national player.

The tactical maneuvering generated by the crush of cooler brands is beginning to show itself in a battle for niches in the marketplace: Citrus-based versus malt-based products, four-bottle versus six-bottle packs and price-point testing.

Brown-Forman plans to operate California Cooler as an independent unit, said a spokesman for the distiller, adding that California Cooler chairman Michael Crete and president Stewart Bewley will stay on in those positions.

B-F is "very pleased" with advertising Chiat/Day, Los Angeles, has done for California Cooler and "there has been no consideration" given to an agency change, the spokesman said.

California Cooler director of marketing Tom Gibbs predicted the acquisition will allow it to substantially increase its annual ad spending, estimated at $10 million.

Chiat/Day executives are expected to meet July 9 with their counterparts at California Cooler and B-F to discuss strategy for the coming year.

Industry observers put California Cooler's share

(Continued on Page 64)

Saturn, ringing with hype, puts off agency pick

By JESSE SNYDER

DETROIT—The agency review for one of the year's most intriguing new accounts, General Motors' Saturn unit, has been postponed 12 months amid waves of free publicity that have already generated widespread public interest in the venture.

That move reverses expectations by Saturn and GM executives when the new subsidiary was established Jan. 8 that an agency might be picked by midsummer (AA, Jan. 10).

"We don't need an agency to build up Saturn's image," said spokesman Stan Hall. "Almost the reverse is true. We've had so much positive publicity that we need to cool public expectations. After the plant-site selection is behind us, Saturn executives are going underground for a while."

GM has not publicly discussed likely ad budgets for Saturn, but, based on expected sales targets, it would start with an ad budget of about $50 million and build within three years to about $120 million a year.

The delay in picking an agency certainly hasn't slowed unsolicited contacts. "Dozens" of letters, presentations and even videotapes of roughed-out commercials are bulging file cabinets at Saturn's temporary headquarters in suburban Detroit.

"We've heard from image-builders, agencies, students, even professors who want us to look at class projects," Mr. Hall said.

Among agencies that have expressed interest in Saturn are: W.B. Doner & Co., Southfield; N W Ayer, Detroit, GM's corporate agency, and Benton & Bowles, which will become part of the GM agency family through its merger with D'Arcy MacManus Masius, Bloomfield Hills. DMM handles GM's Cadillac and Pontiac divisions.

Saturn plans to announce soon—maybe as early as this week—the site for its plant.

The GM unit's first president, the late Joseph Sanchez, said he wanted an agency on hand before the plant site was announced so it could begin to shape a positive

(Continued on Page 62)

Ready to rebound

Tv sports market decline ends

By ROBERT RAISSMAN

Tv sports, which last year saw prices and ratings plummet virtually across the board, may be poised for the start of a turnaround this season. No one is calling sports a seller's market, but there are signs that the decline of tv sports has bottomed out.

"I wouldn't rely on the sports market staying soft for long," said Steve Leff, exec vp, Backer & Spielvogel, New York. "If it stays relatively depressed and all other marketplaces move along in other dayparts, sooner or later sports is going to regain the attraction it lost when it was so aggressively priced."

Network sales executives, who generally try to portray every tv daypart as bullishly as possible, no longer are admitting that sports sales are soft. Still, the network sales chiefs concede that because of the glut of sports programing last season and the availability of nonsports programing alternatives that appeal to men, the actual health of the sports market remains impossible to predict with accuracy.

"This is a very hard market to call, so I'll call it uncertain," said Robert Blackmore, senior vp-sales, NBC. "There is a little more to work with in this market as

(Continued on Page 64)

Last Minute News

Honig will switch from Geers Gross

NEW YORK—Marvin Honig definitely is leaving Geers Gross, where he is vice-chairman and executive director, as soon as he completes some client assignments within the next month or so, sources say. Mr. Honig, formerly vice-chairman/creative director at Doyle Dane Bernbach, joined Geers Gross last fall. Neither Mr. Honig, who had previously denied he was leaving (AA, June 17), nor agency president Bob Gross could be reached.

Benetton exports Sisley chain to U.S.

NEW YORK—Benetton, the Italian sportswear retailer, this fall will introduce here its Sisley chain of upscale women's clothing stores. J. Walter Thompson USA handles. JWT also has created the Benetton shops' first tv commercials, for MTV: Music Television, and their first radio commercial, a fund-raiser for USA for Africa.

Max Factor talks scents with Paul Newman

STAMFORD, CONN.—Paul Newman is in the "initial stages" of discussing a men's fragrance with Max Factor, but Factor president Paul Masturzo says progress in the talks will depend on how great a part the actor is willing to play in advertising the fragrance. Another fragrance company discussed a similar project a year ago but backed off when Mr. Newman said he did not wish to appear in any advertising, sources say.

GM agencies make demands of magazines

DETROIT—General Motors' "point agencies" designated to head corporatewide negotiations with magazines (AA, May 27) are demanding a

(Continued on Page 3)

Murdoch gives pope new pulpit

By WILLIAM F. GLOEDE and JOHN J. O'CONNOR

NEW YORK—In what executives at Rupert Murdoch's News America syndicate are calling an "historic" arrangement, Pope John Paul II, the vicar of the Roman Catholic Church, will become a newspaper columnist in September.

Both News America and Times of London syndicates plan to begin moving the weekly column, entitled "Observations by Pope John Paul II" and complete with a photo of the pontiff, for publication in newspapers as of Sept. 8.

The pope will not actually wit

(Continued on Page 62)

NEWSPAPER

AA
DC2001 4CONGLI FMJF M
CONGRESSIONAL INFO SERVICE
SR1 4COUISITIONS
4520 EAST-WEST HWY #800
WASHINGTON DC 20014

NBC bucks billion barrier in upfront

By VERNE GAY

NEW YORK—NBC-TV by the end of the week is expected to become the first network ever to write $1 billion in upfront business, network and agency sources say.

The network, which has figured prominently in the upfront plans of virtually every advertiser seeking young adults, was most recently bolstered by major commitments from Leo Burnett USA, BBDO, Ogilvy & Mather and J. Walter Thompson USA, each of which completed its NBC buy over the last 10 days.

There also were reports that Procter & Gamble, Cincinnati, and Lever Bros. have put sizable buys on "hold," the last step in the negotiating process before signing contracts. General Foods Corp., White Plains, N.Y., and Coca-Cola Co., Atlanta, also have made substantial commitments to NBC, sources said.

NBC has emerged as the darling of upfront advertisers, primarily because of its strong showing last season in the A.C. Nielsen Co. ratings but also because of its apparent willingness to make deals quickly. NBC also leads its competition by a slim margin among adults 18 to 49, the most sought-after demographic group.

The network's meteoric rise has led some observers to speculate that ABC-TV and CBS-TV, which have severely lagged their rival in booking upfront sales, would be left playing catchup.

However, both began courting advertisers aggressively last week when it became apparent NBC was coming close to snagging nearly half of all upfront budgets, expected to top off at about $2.4 billion.

"CBS and ABC have caught up and have become very, very aggressive," said one agency source.

Last year, NBC wrote about $784 million in the upfront market, sources said, while CBS wrote $767 million and ABC captured $856 million.

Less than $1.5 billion in upfront sales had been clocked before July 4, network and agency sources said. Sources speculated that ABC and CBS, both vigorously pursuing the estimated $900 million still uncommitted, could end up with just

(Continued on Page 62)

Seven 'USA Today' pages hail contributors

Kellogg runs serial ad

By JULIE FRANZ
and WILLIAM F. GLOEDE

Kellogg Co. celebrated July 4 by thanking by name 173,268 consumers who helped the company raise money for the Statue of Liberty-Ellis Island Foundation restoration fund.

The listing took up seven of the nine advertising pages in *USA Today's* first holiday edition, a message that cost Battle Creek, Mich.-based Kellogg an estimated $150,000, minus volume discounts.

The only other display ad in the paper was an Advertising Council color spread, via Kenyon & Eckhardt, New York, for the foundation. Gannett Co., which owns *USA Today*, donated those two pages, a foundation spokesman said.

Kellogg called its seven-page salute a "Statue of Liberty Honor Roll" of the names of consumers who sent the company two Universal Product Codes from Kellogg's Corn Flakes and Kellogg's Crispix. In exchange for the UPC codes, Kellogg donated $86,634, or 50¢ per participating consumer, to the foundation.

As one of the seven founding sponsors of the Statue of Libery restoration project, the company placed itself under a "multi-million-dollar obligation to the fund," the foundation spokesman said. The ad dollars Kellogg spent July 4 were part of that obligation, he added.

Thus far, the foundation has raised $160 million of

(Continued on Page 8)

"USA Weekend:" It wins praise, but Gannett moves to mollify wary newspapers. See Page 66.

Grrrand Prix celebration

Allen Rosenshine (r.), president of BBDO International, whose Pepsi-Cola spot won the Grand Prix among Gold Lion awards in Cannes, celebrated by bringing a real lion into the agency's Manhattan lobby last week. With him is Alan Pottasch, senior vp-creative services at Pepsi-Cola USA. *(See story on Page 12.)*

Highlights

Amil Gargano has relinquished his post as creative director at Ally & Gargano, New York, in a move to free himself to pursue new business more systematically. Beer, soft drinks and travel are among the new-business areas he now is targeting. *See Page 4.*

Emotions have an edge over facts in motivating consumers to buy a specific product. Smart advertisers recognize the strong feelings of joy, anger, love and fear as effective selling tools. *See Page 28.*

CORPORATE CLOSEUP

Thomas Monaghan is founder, chairman and president of Domino's Pizza, the world's largest pizza-delivery chain and a business that has grown at a rate of 40%-plus each year since 1978. Last year's sales of $626 million were up 57% from the previous year. And in October, 1983, Mr. Monaghan also paid more than $50 million to purchase baseball's Detroit Tigers, fulfilling "the biggest worldly goal I ever had." *See Page 4.*

FORUM

Adman David Brand offers advice on managing speculative presentations. *See Page 18.*

DDB executive Doris Willens wonders what's in a name—specifically, Madonna's. *See Page 18.*

INTERNATIONAL

British fan violence at soccer matches in the U.K. is causing advertisers and sponsors to have second thoughts about supporting such events with millions of advertising dollars. *See Page 36.*

The Far East market battle between Dow Jones & Co. and Time Inc., both based in New York, will heat up substantially if Time succeeds in buying *Asiaweek*, one of the region's leading English-language publications. *See Page 37.*

VIDEOTECH

In a cost-cutting move, the struggling, 18-month-old Lifetime cable service has axed 15 staffers. The across-the-board layoffs represent about 8% of the network's 175-person staff. *See Page 38.*

DIRECT MARKETING

CSI Tele-Marketing is preparing for its first expansion since going public earlier this year. The company, which uses telephone surveys to find and develop customers for package-goods manufacturers and retailers in the Northeast and Florida, is preparing to move in September into the Los Angeles, San Francisco and Detroit markets. *See Page 39.*

American Express Travel Related Service Co. is among the first purchasers of a new computer program, marketed by Persoft, that aids direct marketers in selecting potential customers from their in-house lists. *See Page 39.*

COMING THURSDAY

SPECIAL REPORT

Europeans are cultivating their own brand of creativity, be it in advertising or on tv. International-Europe Special Report takes a look at some of the people and media making waves across Europe.

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Vol. 56, No. 52—ADVERTISING AGE (ISSN 0001-8899) is published twice weekly except once a week the first week in January, the first week in July, the fourth week in November and the fourth week in December at 740 Rush Street, Chicago, IL 60611. Second-class postage paid at Chicago and additional mailing offices. Send address changes to ADVERTISING AGE, Circulation Department, 740 Rush Street, Chicago, IL 60611.

Microfilm copies are available from University Microfilms, 300 N. Zeeb Rd., Ann Arbor, Mich. 48103. Microfiche copies are available from Bell & Howell, Micro Photo Division, Old Mansfield Rd., Wooster, O. 44691.

$1.25 a copy, $55 a year, $100 two years. Add $143 per year for air delivery to Europe & Middle East. Add $49 for surface mail to all other foreign countries. WILLIAM STRONG, vp-circulation; ROGER DI GREGORIO, fulfillment director; HEIDI SCHULTZ, senior circulation manager. Four weeks' notice required for change of address. Address all subscription correspondence to circulation department, Advertising Age, 740 Rush St., Chicago, Ill. 60611 (312) 649-5200.

Late West Coast news

'Here's how' fails; A-T turns to Chiat

Software publisher Ashton-Tate, Culver City, Cal., last week abruptly fired Dancer Fitzgerald Sample, Torrance, the same agency it dismissed and rehired less than a year ago. Chiat/Day, San Francisco, was named to replace it. Sources say the company shifted its account to Chiat after concluding the "Here's how" campaign DFS created wasn't boosting sales. A-T vp marketing John Merson said the split with DFS was by mutual agreement. "We decided it was time for a fresh approach," he said. A-T spent about $13 million on advertising and promotion last year.

Pioneer Electronics' vp-marketing communications Sharyl Juhlin has left the Long Beach, Cal.-based consumer electronics company to take on a senior marketing post with CL9, Los Gatos, the new venture founded earlier this year by Apple Computer cofounder Stephen Wozniak. CL9, which stands for Cloud Nine, is developing computerlike products that work with home entertainment sound and tv systems. Vp-marketing Chris Byrne takes on most of Ms. Juhlin's responsibilities at Pioneer.

Hitachi Sales Corp., Compton, Cal., will start its first new network tv campaign in two years in August. "Step into the world of tomorrow with Hitachi," the upcoming ads set in a futuristic space station will say. The commercials will use Hitachi's existing spokesperson, actress Holly Smith.

Sanyo Electric's consumer electronics division, Compton, Cal., named William Byron to the new post of president. The appointment follows the departure of exec vp-sales and marketing Jeffrey Berkowitz, who sources say resigned under fire. Mr. Byron, most recently a principal in a manufacturers' rep company in Southern California, was Sanyo's senior vp-sales marketing from 1971 to 1981. During his tenure at Sanyo, the tv and stereo marketer worked with Nathanson Advertising, Encino,

(Continued on Page 66)

Tv sports

(Continued from Page 1)
opposed to last year."

The tv sports marketplace has been depressed for a number of reasons. The breakup last summer of the National Collegiate Athletic Assn.'s monopoly over college football tv rights led immediately to oversaturation of the sport on tv, both on network and in syndication and cable. The quality of productions varied greatly, and many big events fell short of expectations as entertainment vehicles.

Image tarnished

Also, the image of professional athletes has been tarnished by reports of drug abuse; grand-jury inquiries into suspected drug sales and consumption by baseball players; gambling scandals in professional and college sports; player strikes; huge contracts, and the general impression that athletes are fatter cats than the fat cats who own the teams. There also has been a paucity of star personalities, especially in football, the sport that holds the key to success.

Another reason, sometimes overlooked, is the increasing number of entertainment alternatives presented to male viewers. "People who have watched sports in the past now can also watch a movie on cable," said J. Larre Barrett, vp-sales, ABC Sports.

Mr. Barrett and other network sales executives pointed to a few things that indicate the network sports marketplace may be moving toward the beginning of a turnaround. Programing executives, they said, have begun to respond to the imbalance in the supply-demand equation in sports.

"There will be fewer hours of sports programing [in 1986]," said Jerry Dominus, vp-sales, CBS-TV Network. "There will be a greater concentration on the events that command viewer loyalty."

The major indicator of the health of tv sports is sales for each network's National Football League package. Executives at all three networks said football sales were going well, but none offered specifics.

Mr. Barrett said ABC already has identified $35 million that was put into football in 1983 but was not spent in '84 because some clients had heavy Olympic commitments. "My suspicion is that number is low," Mr. Barrett said. "It may be closer to $50 million, but if you had taken those dollars and put them into the '84 marketplace, you would have had a totally different situation."

Mr. Dominus agreed that the Olympic money would strengthen the market. "I haven't identified how much is out there yet. But they [advertisers] have lots of options," he said. "Some of the money was [allocated as] special appropriations and some of it will be redirected. The question is where."

Monday game the key

A key to over-all NFL sales is ABC's "Monday Night Football." Mr. Barrett indicated that sales were going well, although the "MNF" package is being sold at a lower upfront price than it was during the '84 season.

He said six automobile marketers—Nissan, Ford, Chrysler, Chevrolet, Pontiac and Buick—have bought into the series. Last season, Nissan, Chevy and Buick split the automotive exclusivity. Chevy, however, dropped out of the Super Bowl in a protest over the $1 million-per-minute price tag. Ford picked up that option and has been able to keep its hold in the regular-season games.

The confusion resulting from the Supreme Court decision that broke the NCAA's control of college football tv rights has lifted and both CBS and ABC, the two networks that televise college football, should finally benefit from the lower rights fees they paid for the college games.

Last year, key sports advertisers, worried about dilution and segmentation, cut back spending. Both networks cut ad prices in half (AA, July 30, '84, *et seq.*), charging about $30,000 for a 30-second spot. During the '83 season, college football was priced between $60,000 and $65,000. This season, prices will be increased, but no where near the level reached before the Supreme Court's decision.

Mr. Barrett said during the '84 season ABC sold 11 30-second units to franchise advertisers. He expects 26 units per game on ABC's College Football Assn. package will be sold on a franchise basis. Nissan, which had never been a sponsor of network college football, according to Mr. Barrett, already has purchased a half-game franchise. Miller Brewing Co., Milwaukee, and Stroh Brewery, Detroit, also have bought time on the CFA package.

Last season, the Supreme Court's ruling came so close to the opening of the college football season (AA, July 2, '84) that getting a package to the marketplace was a chore in itself. Mr. Barrett pointed out that ABC had projected a 6.0 rating to its advertisers for the '84 season and wound up doing 33% better.

Many syndicators gone

In all probability there will not be as many games placed into syndication in 1985 as there were in '84. Last season put many syndicators out of business, leaving a much smaller roster of companies around to pick up the pieces.

"Last year, from a network perspective, we, as has CBS, showed that college football is a viable marketing tool for advertisers to utilize and can again get solid ratings," Mr. Barrett said.

But some network executives said that to hold college football up as a sign of a turnaround in the market may not be an accurate measurement. "College football is not a big [advertising] pot to fill up," said one network executive who declined to be identified. "It's not difficult to fill under any circumstances."

Another key to the market will be ABC's sales of the baseball World Series. ABC is exercising its option in its contract with Major League Baseball to telecast all the games in prime time. In 1983, the last time ABC broadcast the World Series, the network sold 11 franchise units per game. For the '85 fall classic, Mr. Barrett said, there will be at least 22 franchise units per game.#

Estimated costs of a :30-spot this fall on major sports

Television sports in 1984-85 was hit with continued audience erosion and severe fragmentation, especially in college football. As a result, prices plummeted and the outlook for 1985-86 was anything but robust. Nevertheless, the tv networks have increased the price of a 30-second spot on every major fall sports property except weekend baseball championship series, ABC's "Monday Night Football" and NBC's coverage of the American Football Conference games. The following chart lists the estimated cost of a 30-second spot on major sports this fall. The prices are based on extensive interviews with network and agency sources and reflect the average prices being paid in the upfront market. These prices, however, vary significantly during the course of the year. A Thanksgiving Day football telecast will command higher rates than a typical weekend game, for example. Likewise, football games played in September will cost less than games played in November and right before Christmas. The prices listed below, however, are a good reflection of the state of the prime sports market at this time. *Source:* Advertising Age.

Sport (network)	1985 Price ($)	1984 Price ($)
College Football (CBS)	35,000-40,000	25,000-30,000
College Football (ABC)	45,000	25,000-30,000
Baseball's Championship Series (NBC)	50,000 (prime time)	130,000 (prime time)
	85,000-90,000 (weekends)	85,000 (weekends)
	35,000-40,000 (weekdays)	25,000 (weekdays)
World Series (ABC)	250,000	230,000 (NBC)
NFL "Monday Night Football" (ABC)	175,000 (with guarantees)	185,000
NFL regular season (CBS)	160,000	150,000
NFL regular season (NBC)	145,000	135,000
AFC playoffs (NBC)	200,000	225,000
NFC playoffs (CBS)	215,000	NA
AFC championship game (NBC)	250,000	275,000
NFC championship game (CBS)	250,000	NA
Super Bowl (NBC)	550,000	500,000 (ABC)

Coolers

(Continued from Page 1)
of the wine-cooler category at 55% to 60%, though the rapid influx of new players is steadily eroding that lead.

According to *Market Watch*, published by M. Shanken Communications, 29 new brands were introduced last year. Nearly a dozen more have appeared on retail shelves so far this year.

Intensely crowded

The crowding is already intense enough that the new players are trying to find niches for their products in subcategories in an effort to claim distinctiveness and avoid charges of "me-tooism."

Coors' Colorado Chiller, a brand rumored earlier to have been in development (AA, June 10), is a malt-based beverage the company hopes to position between the beer and wine markets.

Tv spots created by Tatham-Laird & Kudner, Chicago, carry the theme "Lighter than beer, more refreshing than wine." Those spots begin airing this week in Colorado Chiller's six test markets—Charlotte, N.C.; Dayton, O.; Lubbock, Tex.; Orlando; San Diego, and Spokane, Wash.

Schenley is touting its wine-based Dubonnet Splash brand as a "new wave" in coolers, one that sculpts a niche somewhere between coolers and blush wines.

Unlike California Cooler and most of its competitors, which are citrus-flavored, Splash has a taste Schenley says is closer to white zinfandels or kir royale (champagne and creme de cassis).

Both marketers also have pushed the quest for points of difference to their products' packaging. Colorado Chiller will be sold in six-packs rather than the four-pack that has become the cooler standard. Price points ranging from $3.75 to $4.25 will be tried in test, though Coors brand development manager Craig Guthrie said all will give Colorado Chiller a per-bottle price advantage over its competitors.

Schenley is sticking with the four-pack style for Dubonnet Splash, but the product will come in clear bottles. That gives the product what Schenley vp-marketing Andrew Berk called a "far more elegant presentation" than the green bottles commonly used.

Complementing the elegant look is the tv advertising created by Leo Burnett USA, Chicago. The 30-second commercial that broke last week in selected southern and western markets has a glitzy, avante-garde look that is graphically reminiscent of Hollywood musicals of the 1930s and '40s, an agency spokesman said.

Themed "Catch the new wave of refreshment," the spot combines briskly edited footage of a swimmer, a sailor on a motorboat and a cliff-diving woman.

"Basically, we think the brands that will come out on top will be those willing to spend the most marketing dollars," said Schenley's Mr. Berk. "It will be a question of who has the most financial staying power."

Consequently, Schenley is experimenting with three different levels of ad spending—at national rates of $28 million, $20 million and $17 million—to determine just how much money will be necessary for Splash to come out on top.

Industry watchers also expect well known brand names to best survive the category's inevitable shakeout.

As the category creator, California Cooler has created awareness for its name, but such brands as New York-based Joseph E. Seagram & Sons' Seagram's Cooler are getting early trial based on name familiarity, these sources suggest.

Schenley has followed that lead by giving its cooler the Dubonnet name used on its line of cordials.

Brewers cautious on names

Brewers—especially Coors and Stroh Brewery Co., Detroit, which are marketing malt-based rather than wine-based coolers—have shied from tying their names too closely to the products.

Tv spots for Colorado Chilier are tagged "Made by Coors in Golden, Colo.," but the brewer's name is downplayed on product packaging.

"This is a different product competing in a different category [than our other brands]," Mr. Guthrie explained. "If we called it Coors' Colorado Chiller, consumers would automatically think beer, and we don't want that."

Similarly, packaging and advertising for Stroh's White Mountain Cooler carry no mention of the brewer (AA, March 11). MCA Advertising, New York, handles.

Heileman is preparing national rollouts for two products in the category. One is Country Cooler, a wine-based product marketed under an agreement with Vineyards Unlimited, Santa Fe Springs, Cal. (AA, Aug. 20).

Heileman also is moving La Croix Sparkling Cooler, carrying the name of its mineral-water subsidiary, into national distribution. The company said it has no immediate plans for national ad campaigns. W.B. Doner & Co., Southfield, Mich., handles.

One brewer that reportedly has pulled out of the cooler market is Milwaukee's Pabst Brewing Co. According to published reports, Pabst ceased marketing its Margarita Cooler brand (AA, Sept. 3) after the brewery was acquired by Paul Kalmanovitz. A Pabst spokesman declined comment on the brand's status.#

'Do you know me?' Yes, but I'm Peking

By STEWART ALTER

New territory in on-location tv commercials shooting was opened last month when American Express Co., New York, and its agency, Ogilvy & Mather, became the first to shoot an American commercial in the People's Republic of China.

The commercial, which will be the 65th in the "Do you know me?" series for the American Express Card, will go on the air later this month or early August, said Glen Gilbert, director of advertising-consumer card marketing at American Express. It was shot June 11 and 12 in three locations in Beijing—the Forbidden City, Tian An Men Square and the State Guest House.

The featured person in the new commercial is Lord Wedgwood. "Do you know me? I'm one of the biggest names in china," he says, referring to Wedgwood china. "But here in Peking a lot of people don't recognize me."

The card is accepted in more than 145 establishments in 19 cities in the P[illegible]C, and just last April 15 the Great Wall Sheraton Hotel in Beijing became the first internationally managed property in that country to accept the card.

Letting people know that "we are the international card and our presence in China is growing" was one of the reasons for developing the Chinese commercial, said Mr. Gilbert. But "it was also a way of refreshing and extending the 'Do you know me?' campaign."

He would not say how much the commercial cost, but said it was "not terribly out of the pattern" of costs for producing other commercials in that series.

While American Express is the first American company "to our knowledge" to shoot in China, said Mr. Gilbert, the Hong Kong crew it used believed Asian commercials had been filmed there.

While the Chinese were helpful, they were unaccustomed to American tv commercials production, and some explanation was required. For instance, in an eating scene in the State Guest House, it had to be explained that they were perfectly satisfied to have actors dressed as businessmen rather than real businessmen in the background. And no, they were not interested in eating the food that had been sitting on the plates during the lengthy shoot.#

Contributing to this article were reporters Gay Jervey in New York, Brian Lowry in Los Angeles and Susan Garland in Dallas.